

‘No Fat Soldiers’: Ft. Bragg Troops Were Carefully Screened for Trump’s Stunt Visit

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President Donald Trump’s campaign-rally style at Fort Bragg on Tuesday was a carefully styled event optimized for a national broadcast — right down to the weight and political allegiances of the soldiers allowed to appear on camera.

According to a Wednesday report from [Military.com](https://www.military.com), the Pentagon and leaders of the 82nd Airborne Division were unusually focused on the visual trappings of Trump’s visit to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the Army — which isn’t necessarily a surprise considering the president and Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth both came to their current jobs after successful television careers.

“No fat soldiers,” one unit-level message reviewed by Military.com stated. “If soldiers have political views that are in opposition to the current administration and they don’t want to be in the audience then they need to speak with their leadership and get swapped out.”

Soldiers who appeared on television behind Trump during his broadcast [booed and jeered](#) when the president mentioned his predecessor, Joe Biden. Partisan cheering at military events — or while a member of the armed forces is in uniform — has long been considered a violation of Defense Department policies, and can lead to disciplinary action. Trump certainly goaded it, though, speaking to soldiers as if they were attendees at a campaign rally.

“This has been a bad week for the Army for anyone who cares about us being a neutral institution,” one commander at Fort Bragg, who asked to remain anonymous, told [Military.com](#). “This was shameful. I don’t expect anything to come out of it, but I hope maybe we can learn from it long term.”

The Pentagon did not directly respond to questions from [Military.com](#), calling the questions themselves “nothing more than a disgraceful attempt to ruin the lives of young soldiers.”

Trump will continue inflating his ego under the guise of celebrating the Army’s birthday on Saturday, when he will attend a lavish military parade through the streets of Washington, D.C. The parade just so happens to fall on Trump’s 79th birthday. *Rolling Stone* [reported](#) earlier this month on how Trump has long craved a military parade, and that several Trump advisers and aides privately refer to the event, which is expected to cost taxpayers tens of millions of dollars, “Donald Trump’s birthday parade.”

Millions are [expected to protest](#) the parade, which comes the weekend after Trump federalized and deployed National Guard troops to respond to protests against his administration’s deportation agenda in Los Angeles. The deployment only seemed to exacerbate the conflict, which didn’t stop Trump from mobilizing Marines to deploy to the city, as well. Trump warned against anyone preparing to protest his parade on Saturday. “If any protester wants to come out, they will be met with very big force,” the president said from the Oval Office on Tuesday.